DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 157 236 EC 111 174

AUTHOR	Breiter, Joan
TITLE	A Survey of the Status of Education for Gifted Elementary Children in the State of Iowa. Volume III, Issue II.
INSTITUTION	Iowa State Univ. of Science and Technology, Ames. Research Inst. for Studies in Education.
PUB DATE	May 78
NOTE	36p.; A RISE Research Report
AVAILABLE FROM	Research Institute for Studies in Education, College of Education, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Administration; Elementary Education; Exceptional Child Research; Federal Legislation; *Gifted; *Program Development; School Districts; State Programs; *State Surveys
IDENTIFIERS	Elementary Secondary Education Amendments 1970; *Iowa

ABSTRACT

The status of education for gifted elementary grade children in Iowa was examined by means of a survey instrument focusing on state guidelines for program development, the ideas of experts in gifted education, and program relationship to Public Law 91-230 (The Elementary and Secondary Education Amendments of 1970). Of the 351 school districts responding (out of 449 surveyed), 36 currently have a program, 60 are planning a program, 253 do not plan to have a program, and two had a program in the past. Conclusions of the survey included recommendations regarding the following problem areas: (1) identification of gifted children, (2) effective evaluation procedures, (3) proper preparation of teachers, and (4) a definition of giftedness appropriate to the program and which also follows federal and state guidelines. Other recommendations include the need for school districts to involve the community in program planning and to receive financial suppport from federal, state, and local governmental levels. Appended are a tabular analysis of survey results, a listing of responding school districts, and the survey questionnaire. (DB)

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A SURVEY OF THE STATUS OF EDUCATION FOR GIFTED ELEMENTARY CHILDREN IN THE STATE OF IOWA

By

Joan Breiter

Volume III, Issue II

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May 1978

EC 111174

PREFACE

The Research Institute for Studies in Education encourages and assists College of Education faculty in research endeavors. By way of it's Released Time for Research Program, RISE and the department in the College provide faculty with time and some support to engage in research which is meaningful to the faculty member, the department, and the College generally. Very often this research is initiation for research on a wider and more comprehensive scale.

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Issue I Media and Attitudes: A Bibliography of the Twenty Five Years of Audio Visual Communication Review by Michael Simonson, Pamela Thies, and Georgeann Burch (Department of Secondary Education)

Issue II A Survey of the Status of Education for Gifted Elementary Children in the State of Iowa by Joan Brieter (Department of Elementary Education)

Issue III Elementary School Children's Views of Occupational Roles by Ruth Scheresky (Department of Elementary Education)

Issue IV A Sixteen Item Trait Anxiety Scale for Children

and

Children, Psychological Sweating, Teaching Approaches and Anxiety by Allan A. Rupnow (Department of Physical Education

It is hoped that these presentations will be informing and of interest to all College of Education faculty. We especially hope this evidence of research will be inspiring to those who are initiating their first faculty research endeavor.

William A. Hunter, Director
Research Institute for Studies in Education

May 1978

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A SURVEY OF THE STATUS OF EDUCATION FOR
GIFTED ELEMENTARY CHILDREN IN THE STATE OF IOWA

Introduction and Background

Education for gifted children as an educational priority has ranged from high to low over the past 20-30 years. Presently, increased and needed attention is being given to this subgroup of the school population which has sometimes been called the "other" or "forgotten" minority.

Public Law 91-230, Section 806, U.S. Office of Education states, "Gifted and talented children are those identified by professionally qualified persons who by virtue of outstanding abilities are capable of high performance. These are children who require differentiated educational programs and/or services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program in order to realize their contribution to self and society."

This Public Law recognizes giftedness may occur in the areas of general intellectual ability, specific academic aptitude, creative or productive thinking, leadership ability, visual and performing arts, and psychomotor ability. It is the basis for the rationale outlining the need for legislative provisions which would allow Iowa to fulfill its goal of offering appropriate educational opportunities to all of Iowa's school children. This rationale consists of the following points.

1. Gifted children frequently are unrecognized and their needs unmet in the classroom.
2. The needs of gifted children require specially trained personnel, and appropriate materials and program choices.
3. When educational experiences are provided which do meet the specific needs of gifted children, they make outstanding progress in both achievement and social development.
4. Programming for gifted children is a logical part of providing for all types of exceptional children.
5. Such programs reiterate and confirm the American commitment to the concern for the individual and his needs.
6. These children, which comprise roughly the upper 3% of ability and talent in the United States of America have the capability to positively affect the future of our country and our lifestyle.

7. Because these children, if properly educated, are likely to hold positions of great value, the costs of their education will be more than repaid through the economic benefit to the country of greater taxable income.[1]

On this basis, education for gifted children becomes not an "extra" or "frill", but a responsibility which our educational system cannot ignore, and a priority which must be met by our schools.

How, then, can education for the gifted be recognized? Referring to the basic definition of gifted children given in Public Law 91-230, Section 806, it is apparent that programs for gifted children must be describably different from those meant for other sub-groups of the school population. These programs should be different in that they meet the advanced needs of the highly talented and gifted children which comprise the upper 3% of the school population, i.e., they should not be programs which the average to "bright" student can successfully perform. In addition, gifted programs should be individually based on each student's strengths, needs, and potential capabilities.

Therefore, one may recognize a program appropriate to the needs of gifted students by the following characteristics, indicated in the Marland Report to Congress by the U.S. Commissioner of Education, 1972.[2]

1. A differentiated curriculum stressing higher cognitive concepts and processes.
2. Instructional strategies which focus on the learning styles of the gifted as well as curriculm content.
3. Special grouping arrangements and administrative procedures which are tailored to specific children, such as special classes, honor classes, seminars, resource rooms, and others.

The State of Iowa, through the Department of Public Instruction, has attempted to begin implementation of programs for gifted and talented children by definitively stating its goal for the education of these children in a State Plan unanimously accepted by the State Board of Public Instruction. This overall goal has been described in a Position Statement disseminated by the Iowa D.I, and may be summarized as follows: "to pro-

vide qualitatively differentiated educational programs to meet the unique needs, interests, and abilities of the gifted and the talented in the State of Iowa."[3]

The DPI has attempted to assist interested school districts in planning and implementing programs for gifted and talented students through providing printed materials, resource people and media, and through conducting in-service training for teachers. Similar efforts by the Area Educational Agency (AEA) consultants for gifted education are currently being made. Several colleges and universities within the state are offering graduate work in gifted education on a formal basis. These agencies are aware of and committed to the concept of appropriate educational programs and services, based on Federal and State definitions, for gifted and talented students.

This research survey was conducted to determine the degree to which commitment to gifted education has developed in the 449 public school districts of the State of Iowa. Actual implementation of gifted education on an effective, recognizable basis can only be accomplished within the individual schools, How they interpret and implement, and on what basis they interpret and implement, the guidelines for meeting the needs of gifted and talented students determines whether the intent of such guidelines is being recognized and met.

Procedures

During the summer of 1977, the investigator developed a survey instrument for use in determining the status of education for gifted and talented elementary students in the State of Iowa. Representatives of the DPI and AEAs were asked to critique the instrument and suggest possible changes. The instrument was then revised and printed in its present form. A copy

of the instrument may be found at the end of this article. The reader may find it helpful to be aware of the following regarding its content.

1. Much of the instrument is based on material distributed by the Iowa DPI for program development in gifted and talented education.
2. Several items reflect the distilled thinking of people like Rugh Martinson, James Gallagher, and Joe Renzulli on program implementation, the qualifications for teachers working with gifted children, and program evaluation.
3. Several items reflect the reseacher's interest in determining the districts' reasons for development of a program for gifted children, as well as the form inplementation takes, and the closeness of fit which these programs may or may not have in relation to PL 91-230, Section 806 and the State Plan endorsed by the Iowa State Board of Public Instruction.

A copy of the survey instrument with cover letter was sent in October 1977 to the Superintendent of Schools of each of the 449 public school districts listed in the 1976-77 Iowa Educational Directory. These people were asked to complete the instrument or to delegate completion to an appropriate person on their faculty, and to return it to the researcher by December 31, 1977. Although the respondent was asked to supply his name, title, and other pertinent information, the reseacher pledged individual anonymity of respondents in reporting survey results.

Date supplied by each responding system was prepared for computer analysis, which tabulated responses to each item of the survey where this was appropriate procedure. The researcher separately recorded accompanying comments and other information which did not lend itself to computer analysis for use in later interpretation of items. Not all respondents answered all questions or completed other than the data page which preceded the instrument. Several schools returned the survey beyond the deadline, thus missing inclusion in the computer analysis. The discussion of each item is based on the responses of those who answered the particular question involved. Therefore, totals vary from question to question.

Results

Of the 449 public school districts in the State of Iowa, 351 returned the survey instrument by the December 31, 1977 deadline, a 78% response. Thirty-six of the responding districts reported having an operative elementary program for gifted children at this time, 60 reported being in the planning stages for such a program, 253 said they had no plans to implement a program for gifted/talented children in the forseeable future, and 2 reported on past elementary level programs for gifted children which are no longer operative.

Table 1 Program status of responding schools*

Status	Number
Have program	36
Planning program	60
Do not plan to have a program	253
Had a program in past	2

* of the 449 Iowa districts

Twelve respondents reported from districts with a K-12 enrollment of 5000 or more students, fifteen with 2500-4999 students, nineteen with 200-2499 students, fifty-two with 100-1999 students, one hundred ninety with 300-999 students, and forty-one with under 300 students. One hundred thirteen respondents indicated they would be willing to discuss their present program, their plans for a program or the possibility of a future program in their school system. (See Table 2) Comments which accompanied many of these responses indicated both interest in and the feeling that help in embarking on a program was needed and would be welcomed. Those districts with operative programs often noted they would be happy to have visitor-observers in the system, and had prepared materials for distribution to

faculty, parents, and other interested persons.

Table 2 K-12 enrollment of responding schools

enrollment categories	number of schools
5000 or more	12
2500 - 4999	15
2000 - 2499	19
1000 - 1999	52
300 - 999	190
Under 300	41

One of the crucial determinents as to whether a program truly has the elements characteristic of a program for gifted/talented, as outlined by PL 91-230, Section 806 and the Iowa State Plan, revolves around the definition of giftedness and the method by which a district identifies its gifted children. Of the 54 respondents who supplied the definition of giftedness used in their programs, 36 directly referred to the one given by government agencies. The second most frequent definition used considered only the academically gifted (6 responses) or stated they dealt with the upper 3% of the school population (3 responses) . . . a similar definition. Other definitions stated by one or two respondents ranged from considering every student as gifted to considering only such specific individual areas as creativity, special intellectual promise, high achievement in reading, and identified giftedness in specified areas. (See Table 3, Appendix, for composite of trends reported by districts with programs for this section of the report.)

From the comments volunteered by the respondents, defining giftedness and determining how best to identify gifted students is a major problem. To a relatively large degree, it would appear that the Federal and State definitions of gifted/talented are not fully accepted by many districts.

There appears to be a trend to consider the so-called "bright" child as a gifted child. While these children are usually the top students in their class, the regular school curriculum, well taught, is adequate challenge for them, and they would not be able to fully profit from the qualitatively differentiated curriculum recommended for the gifted child. They often fall considerably below the IQ level associated with the outstandingly intellectually gifted child and/or do not display the degree of talent in any of the areas noted in the "official" definition which would denote unusually high ability or potential in one or more of these areas.

Therefore, it would seem there is some confusion in definition and/or application of definition in many districts. Quite often, plans are implemented which are based on the interests of students called gifted by the district, but this population sometimes consists of whoever is determined to be the "top" students in those classes (at IQ levels of 115-125 or 130) rather than students needing programs above and beyond the regular curriculum, or students specifically identified as having potential for very high-level work whether or not their present classroom work reflects this potential. It is difficult to make a judgement on this matter. Is it crucial that a school system devise a program based on federal/state guidelines, or is the overall school population (including gifted) better served by programs which include other children than those strictly defined as gifted?

As noted, identification of gifted children poses real problems for many districts. Choosing the criteria for identification, finding the time, money and personnel to conduct initial screening, problems of rescreening or updating from year-to-year in regard to money, time, and personnel, mobility of student population . . . all are problems to a greater or lesser degree. Eleven commonly-used selection criteria were listed in the survey

instrument, and respondents were encouraged to share other foms of criteria they used. An overwhelming majority (97%) relied on multiple criteria in the selection/screening process, most commonly choosing from 3 to 8 stated criteria. The most highly used items were: parent nomination, teacher nomination, group IQ scores, individual IQ scores, creativity test scores, and group achievement test scores. To a large extent, this reflects the emphasis most Iowa programs place on enrichment type programs in academic or closely related areas . . . a factor to be discussed in detail later in this report.

Those schools which used multiple identification criteria reported requiring a child meet anywhere from one to nine items to be considered for their program. Most commonly, however, meeting two to four of the criteria was sufficient for the child to be invited to join the program. The decision to invite a child to enter the school's program for gifted children was most often a group decision (42 of 53 respondents to this item indicated group decision-making was operative). The composition of these groups varied widely, but often consisted of a teacher or teachers, and an administrator. Sometimes a consultant's opinion was also sought. In relatively few cases were parents included as part of the decision-making group, and only two schools reported inclusion of students in such a group. The seemingly low use of parents and students in this capacity would appear to be an aspect of the screening/selection procedure which is relatively weak in most programs, though it is possible that the phrasing of the question did not elicit this data adequately. Children often are keenly aware of their capacity or lack of thereof, and parents can add the dimension of long-term observation and intimate knowledge of the child which would improve screening procedures. The use of a group allows for greater objectivity, as well as a variety of viewpoints regarding the child's capacity or potential, than

can be reached by an individual decision-maker. Use of a group to screen and select candidates for a gifted/talented program seems imperative.

Considerable emphasis was given in this survey to determining how programs have been developed . . . whether they were "hastily thrown together" to satisfy public or educator's pressure to "do something", or whether they were soundly, carefully-built programs which meet the guidelines and have the capacity to provide qualitatively differentiated programs for those who need and will benefit by such educational designs and options.

The Iowa State DPI bulletin #420-C1512-10/75 outlines a recommended procedure for initiation and development of a sound G & T program. The nine major procedural steps and the 15 committee responsibilities for developing a plan of action suggested in this bulletin were included in the survey instrument. Responses to this part of the survey showed a wide variation in the procedures used in program development, and the responsibilities assumed by the committee in charge of developing a plan of actions. Relatively few districts closely followed the suggested procedural steps, but, in general, it may be said that the larger the school system, the more of these steps were used in some order.

If the reader will refer to the survey instrument, he will note a suggested sequence of procedural steps indicated (Question #5) . When recording respondents' ordering of procedural steps, it was found that the great majority of responding districts proceded in a different order than suggested. However, districts with an operative program almost always had completed all or all but a few of the steps, while districts still in the planning and initiating stages most often had few steps accomplished. It would appear that most districts are making use of DPI program development guidelines to some degree.

A similar status was revealed when committee responsibilities or steps were analyzed. From one to fifteen of these suggested aspects of developing a plan of action through a designated committee were actually fulfilled. Fifty-four percent of the respondents indicated fulfilling ten or more of the suggested responsibilities, while 46% fulfilled nine or fewer of them. As with the general procedural steps, the sequence of committee action varied widely. Very few districts followed the suggested order for committee development of a plan of action, a number of districts specified no specific order, and most systems with an operative program had fulfilled all or most of the responsibilities in some way.

The number of children served in any one program naturally reflected such factors as total school enrollment, definition of giftedness and screening procedures followed, and the type of program to be implemented. Respondents reported serving from 2 to 1552 children in the district. Seventy-five percent of those reporting an operative program indicated 50 or fewer children were involved. Only 12% (4 districts) of the respondents reported serving between 51 and 100 children, while about 17% (5 districts) served over 100 students.

Almost all programs were multi-grade in composition, Thirty-three programs operated across grade levels, and nine contained only one grade level. Grade/age groups were determined by the individual schools to best accomodate the age span of the children involved, as well as the number of children served. In general, most groupings were of a primary and intermediate nature, with the break point for assignment to a group at grade three or four.

The subject areas explored in these programs varied almost from school to school. In part, they reflected student interest. More often, they

reflected a combination of student interest/need and the availability of teachers or other individuals willing to work with gifted children who also had sufficient expertise in an area to provide an appropriate experience for one or more gifted children. Most often mentioned as subject areas in which gifted children were involved in special programs were math, science, art, social studies, and reading. Those districts reporting the use of mentor programs also tended to rely heavily on these areas, but usually in an out-of-school setting where the mentor involved the child in his specific area of expertise. Several districts reported a program focus on a variety of thinking and process skills which cut across subject area lines.

The majority of reported programs for gifted children (33 of 45) were conducted during the regular school day. Some used both parts of the school day and after-school or Saturday sessions to implement their programs. Seventy-one percent (40 of 56) of those who defined the type of program used, called it basically one of enrichment. Most of the remaining respondents identified their programs as combination of enrichment and special class, enrichment and acceleration, etc. Only 4% identified their program as one of pure acceleration . . . and no one indicated the main focus to be that of guidance.

Inherent in the quality of any educational program is the competence of the person or persons working with the student(s). This is particularly crucial when considering who teaches the gifted child, since specialized, advanced-level programs individually tailored to the individual children are recommended. Who should teach gifted children?

Referring to pp. 42-43 of the Marland Report[2], we note, "The teacher is the key to effective programs and the effective use of resources." This report goes on to indicate several key factors about teachers and gifted

children.

1. The need for special teacher preparation exists. Those with no background in this area are disinterested, misinformed, and sometimes hostile. Those who have worked with special programs are enthusiastic.

2. Inservice study by teachers of gifted children results in significant improvement of professional competence which is reflected in desirable changes in the quality of learning, communication, classroom content, and diversity of classroom experiences.

3. The qualities of successful teachers of the gifted include high intelligence, interest in scholarly and artistic pursuits, and a high degree of student-centeredness. However, the variety of programs and the diversity of levels at which teachers operate in working with gifted children imply that an individualized program of studies leading to acquisition of credentials in this area is preferable to a prescribed course of studies.[4]

For the most part, programs for gifted children in the State of Iowa utilize teachers whose credentials do not include special preparation-beyond that gained by working with children in general, and that which results from an individual interest in this area - to work with gifted children. Of the 51 responding districts which indicated who taught the children in their program for the gifted, twelve employed a special teacher, ten used a team of regular teachers with special strengths, and 21 relied on the regular classroom teacher. The remaining responses indicated partial use of AEA gifted consultants, volunteers, parents, mentors, and administrators to teach their gifted students.

Twenty-six districts felt their teachers of gifted children had recognizable training for the job, fifteen indicated they did not, and nine felt the teacher had a limited degree of training. This training took a variety of forms. Most often, workshops, district inservice, inservice by an agency hired by the district, or attendance at ITAG meetings and conventions were defined as teacher training. A very small number of teachers had received any formal background, such as college work, for their job.

The Marland Report[2] (p. 12) also indicates that personnel other than the teacher who directly works with the gifted child need inservice training if the district's program is to be effective. Of the 41 responses to this item, 33 (79%) reported some type of inservice on gifted education had been provided to the faculty in general, Once again, workshops, inservice presentation, and conference attendance were cited as common inservice experiences. This would seem to indicate that, in many cases, teachers working with gifted children have not received training/inservice beyond the level provided the general faculty. As these districts pursue their programs over a period of time, they may find this factor to be a weakness which will become evident only as they evaluate their programs within the framework of the total school program. Teachers without in-depth specialized training may find it difficult to provide programs which can be qualitatively differentiated in a definitive way from the regular school curriculum.

DPI and HEW definitions of giftedness include areas other than general intellectual ability and specific academic aptitude, as noted early in this report. Reporting school systems give evidence that this extended definition has affected the focus their programs take. Twenty-five percent of the school systems with an operative program or a program in the planning stages said their program focus included all the areas listed in DPI support materials. Sixty-one percent reported a combination of two or more of these areas as their program focus. Only fifteen percent restricted their program focus to the academic area alone.

Stated objectives are both interesting and important aspects of any educational program - whether for gifted children or for some other group. The majority of program objectives cited by respondents dealt with the

following categories:

1. to create an extensive learning atmosphere,
2. to give students the opportunity to use their initiative beyond regular classroom opportunities,
3. to develop various skills, such as independent thinking, critical thinking, problem solving, reading, specific academic skills, and experimentation,
4. to develop a positive self concept, and
5. to have their needs as unique indivuduals met.

Other cited objectives dealt more with the problems systems faced with their programs, such as gaining community acceptance and implementation by a specified date.

Just as every educational program must begin with stated goals or objectives, it must include some form of evaluation to determine its strengths, weaknesses, effectiveness, and progress. Evaluation procedures, as reported by the respondents, revealed not only a wide variation in approach, but also were shown to be one of the greatest problem areas for their programs. Most of the districts with operative programs indicated they had some form of evaluation, but many seemed sketchy,one-sided, lacked adequate controls, or were in a form which could not be objectively documented. Some of these procedures may be more thorough than the survey response indicated, however, as samples of evaluation forms were seldom attatched and the descriptions were necessarily brief.

A few programs were evaluated according to formal instruments designed specifically for that purpose, which dealt with the various aspects of the program, and which were closely related to the stated objectives. Use of questionnaires or interviews to parents, children, teachers, etc. were often used to obtain feedback on a subjective level. Heavy use appeared to be

made of such informal devices as day-to-day observation and feedback from teachers and students. A very few systems brought in outside consultants to evaluate or assist in evaluation of the program. There <u>are</u> programs which are not being evaluated.

It would seem reasonable to expect that this area of program evaluation will be of increasing concern as schools attempt to demonstrate the value of their programs and maintain community support for them. Since the overwhelming majority of the operative programs have been in effect one or less years, this "weakness" in evaluation might well be expected. A strong program, however, should include provisions for evaluation which were determined before implementation.

Each district with a program for gifted children faces unique situations which their program attempts to accomodate in a way they feel most effective for them. When questioned about the specific instructional methods and unique features inherent in the individual programs, much variety was once again noted. By far, the most often-cited special instructional method was some form of personalized learning which was developed through the use of such formats as learning centers, contracts, mini-units, projects, and research projects. A few schools made heavy use of some commercial programs aimed at gifted children. Many more use locally developed supplementary units, research activities, and/or open-ended activities as their major approach. There was little indication that any teaching methods decidedly different from those used with the rest of the class were used with gifted children. The <u>degree</u> of student input and independence did seem to be greater than that allowed most of the students.

What a specific school considered to be unique about their program

also showed wide variation and the attempt to use what was most available to them. There was no one "unique" thing common to the majority of programs. The following items are examples of what respondents considered a unique aspect of their program.

1. Use of a team approach or full-time teacher.
2. Contact with a nearby institution of higher education.
3. Mentors from the community or use of a released-time teacher.
4. Emphasis on process and skills rather than specific content.
5. Programs operating within the concept of mainstreaming.
6. Use of a pull-out program.
7. Use of interest clubs.
8. Emphasis on the underachieving gifted.

Only a few respondents indicated that a program for gifted children had formerly been operative in their system, but discontinued. The reasons given for dropping these few early programs centered around (1) lack of funds, (2) drop in overall enrollment, (3) lack of time, room, and materials to implement a program, (4) lack of acceptance by community, and (5) negarive philosophy od the School Board toward that particular program. At least one of these respondents indicated that a program for gifted children was once again being planned for their district, but in a framework more acceptable to today's society than the former program was.

As earlier noted, most elementary programs for gifted/talented students in Iowa have been implemented very recently. The major reason given for developing and implementing a program for this group within the total school population was, overwhelmingly, to meet student needs. Said in a variety of fashions, this seemed the major motivation, followed by some indication that the system was responding to outside pressure from parents, teachers, or both. Whatever the reason, more and more districts in the

State of Iowa are taking a look at the possibility of implementing educational programs for gifted children. Whether large or small, these systems are beginning to recognize their responsibility to provide appropriate educational opportunities for all students, including the gifted child. Although undocumented by tabulation or statistical procedure, this reseacher gained the impression that many of the 250+ schools who were not actively considering plans for a gifted/talented program would like to know more about this area. Written side-comments by many such respondents expressed hesitation and confusion, but also interest and desire for knowledgeability and guidance.

Conclusions, Implications, and Recommendations

An overall review of the information provided by the respondents to this survey who had operative programs for gifted/talented elementary children, or who were in the planning and implementing stages of a program lead to the following generalizations.

1. There is considerable interest, due both to community and governmental pressure and to a feeling of professional responsibility as educators, to serve the needs of all students by providing programs for the gifted in the State of Iowa.

2. Most districts feel a need for assistance in developing and evaluating such programs.

3. Major problem areas recognized by the districts include (a) identification of gifted children, (b) effective evaluation procedures, (c) proper preparation of teachers to work with gifted children, and (d) a definition of giftedness which is followed through in the actual program framework and implementation to serve the gifted child as defined by the DPI and HEW guidelines.

5. Approximately one-fourth of the school districts in Iowa have no interest/plans for such programs.

6. Programs vary widely as to format and subject matter, but are mainly of the enrichment type.

7. There is a need for specific preparation of teachers in this area, and for general inservice of all teachers who have contact with gifted children.

8. While many districts included a number of areas of giftedness in their program descriptions, it appears that the strongest focus was on the academically/intellectually gifted.

9. The teaching strategies used do not appear to differ greatly in type from those used with all children, but do differ in degree, which allows somewhat more flexibility, student choice, and independent work by these students.

It would seem reasonable to conclude that education for the gifted is of interest and considered to be valuable by many Iowa educators. They are struggling, with varying degrees of success, to effectively solve problems in the areas noted above.

Much more needs to be done than is presently being accomplished. Programs need to be more carefully planned, program quality needs to be diligently guarded, teachers need more training and support, the selection of children for the programs must be such that a program qualitatively differentiable from the regular curriculum is used, and programs evaluation needs further development.

Recommendations relevant to this survey relate directly to the conclusions stated above.

1. School districts interested in planning a program for gifted children need to make a careful needs assessment, to involve the community from the

very beginning of planning, and to take advantage of available help from the colleges and universities, the Department of Public Instruction, and the Area Education Agency consultant in the areas in which each could best lend their specific expertise in program development and teacher training.

2. All of the educational agencies mentioned in #1 need to make better known to school districts the type of help they are best qualified to give.

3. The concept of meeting the needs of gifted children needs to be further explained and justified to the people of Iowa. Too many still regard it as a frill rather than an obligation inherent in the philosophy of education generally held in this country.

4. Financial support for programs for gifted/talented children needs to be forthcoming from Federal and State, as well as local agencies.

Relevant References

1. Department of Public Instruction, State of Iowa, Bulletin #4200-C5399-9/76

2. Marland, Sidney P. Education of the Gifted, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, 1972 pp. 11-12, 42-43.

3. Department of Public Instruction, State of Iowa, Bulletin #4200-C57157-8/76

Appendix

Table 3 Composite: Trends Reported by School Districts with G & T Programs **

Items	School Size *		
	Large	Medium	Small
DPI Definition used	100%	40%	21%
Multiple Screening items used	yes	yes	yes
Most used screening items x	d,e,f,g,h	d,e,f,g,h	d,e,f,g,h
Decision-Makers	group	group	group
Status: program development	100% completed - at least 6 of 9 steps	70% at 6 of 9	21% at 6 of 9
Status: committee work	75% completed - at least 10 of 15 jobs	70% at 10 of 15	35% at 10 fo 15
Number of children served	wide variation - larger systems serve larger numbers		
Type of grouping	multi-grade	multi-grade	multi-grade
Program time	70% in school day	40% in school	90% in school
Teacher	majority use classroom teacher	40% use special teacher	50% use special teacher
Adequate teacher preparation	Large schools more often reported teacher had specialized training than did other school groups.		
Inservice offered	91% yes	60% yes	Less than 50% yes
Program objectives	Better developed in large school districts		
Formal program evaluation	Weakest area of most programs in all groups.		
Instructional methods	some form of individualization	some form of individualization	some form of individualization
Unique features	general responses showed no specific trend.		
Time operative	majority in first year of operation.		
Rensonforinitiation	student need	question rarely responded to.	

* Large - 2500 - 5000 or more K-12 enrollment = 12 school district
Medium - 1000-2499 K-12 enrollment = 10 school districts
Small - up to 999 K-12 enrollment = 14 school districts

** Most common response is reported

x see Survey instrument, Question 2

School Districts Reporting Programs for Gifted Elementary Children

Allison-Bristow Community School District
Amana Community School District
Ankeny Community School District
Boone Community School District
Burlington Community School District
Carroll Community School District
Cedar Falls Community School District
Center Point Consolidated School District
Clinton Community School District
Council Bluffs Community School District
Davenport Community School District
Des Moines Independent Community School District
Fort Madison Community School District
Galva Community School District
Gilbert Community School District
Greene Community School District
Grinnell-Newvurg Community School District
Grundy Center Community School District
Independence Community School District
Jefferson Community School District
Le Mars Community School District
Madrid Community School District
Maquoketa Community School District
Meservy-Thornton Community School District
Nashua Community School District
Nevada Community School District
New Hartford Community School District
Newton Community School District
Rockwell-Sevaledale Community School District
Saydel Consolidated School District
Sioux City Community School District
South Clay Community School District
Storm Lake Community School District
Van Buren Community School District
West Des Moines Community School District
Western Dubuque County Community School District

School Districts Reporting Plans for Programs for Gifted Elementary Students

Albia Community School District
Algona Community School District
Ames Community School District
Anthon-Oto Community School District
Belle Plaine Community School District
Bettendorf Community School District
Carlisle Community School District
Cedar Rapids Community School District
Central Clayton Community School District
Central Clintom Community School District
Central Lee Community School District
Cherokee Community School District
College Community School District
Denison Community School District
Diagonal Community School District
Dubuque Community School District
Dysart-Genesea Community School District
East Monona Community School District
Eastern Allamakee Community School District
Eastwook Community School District
Edgewood-Colesburg Community School District
Fairfield Community School District
Fort Dodge Community School District
Graettinger Community School District
Hampton Community School District
Hinton Community School District
Ida Grove Community School District
Indianola Community School District
Jesup Community School District
Lakuta Community School District
Laurens Community School District
Lawton-Bronson Community School District
Lewis Central Community School District
Marshalltown Community School District
Mid-Prairie Community School District
Muscatine Community School District
New Hampton Community School District
North Fayette County Community School District
North Polk Community School District
North Winneshiek Community School District
Northeast Community School District
Northwest Webster Community School District
Northwood-Kensett Community School District
Norway Community School District
Oskaloosa Community School District
Pekin Community School District
Plainfield Community School District
Pleasant Valley Community School District
Reinbeck Community School District
Southeast Polk Community School District
Springville Community School District
Van Meter Community School District

Waverly-Shell Rock Community School District
West Branch Community School District
West Burlington Community School District
Westwood Community School District
Whiting Community School District
Winfield-Mount Union Community School District
Woodbury Central Community School District

Gifted and Talented Education - A Program Survey

PRELIMINARY DATA SECTION (TO BE FILLED OUT WHETHER YOU DO OR DO NOT HAVE A G & T PROGRAM)

School District _____

Address _____

_____

_____

Telephone _____

Name and Title of person supplying information _____

_____

We: (check one)

_____ Have a G & T program at the present time. Survey instrument which follows is completed.

_____ Have no current program, but are in the planning stages. Instrument which follows is completed as far as is possible to do so at this time.

_____ Have no plans for a G & T program at the present time. Only the preliminary data section on this page is completed.

_____ Once had a G & T program, but do not have one at the present time. Instrument which follows is completed and describes the program we had at one time.

Our K-12 enrollment falls in the following category:

_____ 5000 or more students

_____ 2500 - 4999 students

_____ 2000 - 2499 students

_____ 1000 - 1999 students

_____ 300 - 999 students

_____ Under 300 students

I would / would not be willing to discuss our program in a follow-up telephone conversation.

GENERAL DIRECTIONS

Please answer all questions in the survey as completely as possible. This is very important in being able to correctly identify different factors in your program. If you are in the planning stages, answer as much as you can at this stage. If you had a program, but no longer have one, answer in the light of your past program. If you need more room than is provided, please feel free to attach sheets.

GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION - PROGRAM SURVEY

1. What is the definition of gifted used in your program?_____

_____

_____

2. The following items are commonly used in the screening process when identifying gifted and/or talented children. Which ones do you use? (Check as many as apply.)

_____ a. peer nomination

_____ b. student self-nomination

_____ c. parent nomination

_____ d. teacher nomination

_____ e. group intelligence test scores

_____ f. individual intelligence test scores

_____ g. creativity test scores (performance or potential)
Underline one or both if they apply.

_____ h. group achievement test scores

_____ i. pupil products

_____ j. behavior rating scales

_____ k. rank order in class

_____ l. other _____

_____

3. In how many of the items you checked in Question 2 do children have to "qualify" for admittance to your program? _____

4. Who makes the final decision on admittance to the program?_____

_____

_____

5. What procedure was used to initiate and develop your G & T program? The items below represent possible steps in program development. Number, in the order that is correct for your form of program development, those which apply to your program development sequence. If you used other steps than those listed, please add them at the correct place in the sequence. (Steps taken from the Iowa State DPI bulletin 4200-C15121-10/75.)

____ a. district's philosophy regarding G & T, as well as total school program, stated

____ b. leadership designated

____ c. planning committee formulated

____ d. support pledged by administration and school board

____ e. committee developed plan of action

- ____ program goals stated
- ____ school's position stated
- ____ definition of gifted and talented developed
- ____ needs assessment conducted
- ____ assessment of existing conditions made
- ____ resource survey within school and community conducted
- ____ scope of program defined
- ____ criteria for student selection determined
- ____ lines of communication with school board and staff developed and consistently used
- ____ parents involved
- ____ staff selected
- ____ role of support personnel determined (team approach)
- ____ programming considerations identified and developed
- ____ program options identified
- ____ evaluation of program planned

____ f. committee chairman presented plan of action to administration for approval and/or suggestions

_____ g. plan of action presented to school board

_____ h. public relations activities with community carried out

_____ i. program was implemented in the curriculum

6. How many children are served by this program?_____

7. At what grade levels (or their equivalents) is this program operative?

_____

8. Are children from more than one grade level in the same group?_____

Comments_____

_____

_____

9. What subject areas are involved in the program?_____

_____

_____

10. Is the program an in class/after school/Saturday etc. program? Please describe its parameters and organization._____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

11. Would you describe your program as basically one of enrichment, acceleration, or special class (homogeneous grouping)?_____

12. Is the program taught by a special teacher, a team of teachers, the regular classroom teacher, or other arrangement (if other arrangement, please specify)?

_____

_____

13. Does the person (or persons) who works with the gifted and/or talented in your program have special training to do so?_____ If so, what type of training? If not, what other type of qualification does this person(s) have to work with these children?_____

14. Was inservice training given to those teachers actively working with the children in your G & T program?_____ If so, please describe the inservice program used._____

15. Does your program concentrate on academically/creatively/socially/leadership/psychomotor/visual and performing arts gifted? Circle all which apply.

16. What are the major objectives of your program?_____

17. How do you evaluate your program?_____

18. What special methods of instruction are used with the children in the program, based on student identification and your assessment of his/their needs?

19. Please describe anything you feel is unique (or different from most programs about which you know) about your program.

20. How long has your program been operative?

21. If you once had a program, but have discontinued it in your school, why did you discontinue it?

22. If you are in the process of beginning a program for gifted and talented children, what are the major reasons you are initiating this program?